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THE
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Volume XX.

W. P. ATKINSON, Editor.

Number Four.

PRIMARY SCHOOLS.

BY FRANCES H. TURNER.

[The following excellent paper was read at the last meeting of the Massachusetts State Teachers' Association.]

I propose, in the present paper, to consider the imperfections which exist in our Primary Schools. The old maxim says, "Take care of the pennies, and the pounds will take care of themselves;" and it is just as true, that, if we will take care of the Primary Schools, the Colleges will take care of themselves. That there are many and great imperfections existing in our Primary Schools, I suppose no one will deny. Let us see if we can find any general, deeply rooted faults, from which all the others may be supposed to spring.

There are, it seems to me, two. The first and deepest is the general impression with relation to the necessary qualifications for a Primary School teacher which prevails both among teachers and committees, with whom brains seem to be considered nearly or quite a superfluous article. The credit, or rather discredit, of this opinion is due, however, principally to the Committees. Many of them — not all to be sure — act on the principle that anything will do for a Primary School. They give the good teachers the High and Grammar Schools, and, when they are supplied, fill up the

Primaries with what is left. This may be a mistaken impression on my part, but facts are in my favor. At an examination for teachers, held not very long since, and in a city some miles nearer than Pekin, an arrangement was made by which those ladies who acquitted themselves most creditably were placed on the list of substitutes for Grammar Schools, while the remainder — the refuse, as it were — were consoled for their shortcomings by places on the Primary School list.

Let this abuse be first corrected; let the importance of the Primary School teacher's work be more fully recognized; let gentlemen high in authority refrain from such remarks as the following, made to me not long since concerning one of our most esteemed teachers, "She teaches a Primary School, *but* she is a lady of great ability, *nevertheless*." Wonderful that she should be! (I may add, by way of sequel to the foregoing, that the lady in question has since been called away from the Primary department.)

Just in proportion as this recognition of the necessity of brains as a qualification for a Primary teacher increases, will the schools improve. I can say nothing in support of the principle, that has not already been said. The doubters seem not to discern the application of the oft-quoted proverb, "Just as the twig is bent, the tree's inclined," or, if they do, they are exceedingly careless as to which way the twig shall be bent. There is, to be sure, another side to this argument. Good teachers do not *want* Primary Schools. It cannot be denied, that, to many, the teaching of small children is anything but agreeable. Still, there are some to whom it is really a pleasure, who, being ambitious, are deterred from it by a knowledge of the impression on the public mind, that the Primary School teacher is of inferior rank to the teacher of a Grammar or High School. This impression naturally places a woman of much ambition in rather an undesirable position.

The second underlying fault existing in the Primary Schools consists in the fact, that the memory alone is exercised. From the moment a child enters school, the process of furnishing the unformed mind is commenced, and throughout the Primary course it is continued. What faculty beside the memory is exercised? Positively, none. The mental food furnished is of a sort that the childish

mind cannot possibly assimilate. The teachers do not keep in view the question, how much they can strengthen and prepare the minds of the children to receive in after days; but rather the question, how much they can crowd into them at once. Perhaps, indeed, I should not say crowd *into*; for it does not enter *in*, but remains on the outside, — a clumsy, obstructive, worse-than-useless accumulation.

Take, for instance, the subject of number. Generally, it is not taken up till the children have been more than a year in school, during which time the cultivation of the memory has been sedulously attended to. The true aim of Primary instruction is to form the mind of the child. Is it the way to do that, to give him five hundred and seventy-six of the most prosaic and uninteresting facts, and require him to commit them to memory, — whether understandingly or not is of no consequence? If the huge, lumbering accumulation can be compelled to adhere firmly to the outside of the child's mind long enough to enable him to reply with proper fluency to the sharply-put questions, Seven and six are how many? Eight times seven? Nine times eight? and so on, then all is well; the work is done; the child has passed examination, and with a hundred per cent, — and what more would any reasonable mortal have? More, very much more, would some mortals have, whether reasonable or unreasonable. First, they would have the child show himself a child, and not a parrot. Second, they would have him able to answer the same questions with equal promptness after a six weeks' vacation. "But," says some astonished and indignant teacher, "who in his senses would expect a child to be as prompt with his tables at the beginning of the new term as he was at the end of the last? It is out of the question, — an absurdity." It *is* an absurdity, as she looks at it, and the last of a *chain* of absurdities. She speaks the truth; and why *is* it the truth? Simply for this reason; — those five hundred and seventy-six facts were never a part of the child's mind; they merely adhered, more or less firmly, as the case might be, to the surface; but, just in proportion as the mind was brought in contact with other thoughts, other pleasures, other cares, they gradually wore off, till only a few, and those sadly dim and faded, remained to tell of the lost glories. Probably our astonished and indignant friend will next exclaim, "I

should just like to see a teacher whose pupils could stand examination as well at the end of vacation as they could before." Perhaps it is an impossibility; but, at least, an experiment having such a result as its object might be tried. The underlying principle to be borne in mind is, to give the children nothing that their minds cannot assimilate; to hurl no startling facts at them, but to give them the materials from which they are to collect their information; guide them in their searchings after truth, — *teach* them, in short instead of *making* them *learn*. I would begin the study of number as soon as I began the alphabet. When the idea of "A" comes to be a part of the child's mind, so that to him it is A, and only A forever, let, at the same time, the idea of *one*, the fundamental idea of unity, be developed; so that one thing will be to him one thing, as light to him is light, and darkness darkness.

As the idea of B and C are developed, develop also the ideas of two and three. As the child proceeds and combines c-a-t to make cat, let him combine two and three to make five, by the use of objects. By using ten objects, he may be led to combine them so as to find out for himself all the different combinations which can be produced with numbers under ten. Make it a recreation, and be sure that nothing further is attempted, until he is perfectly familiar with them. When this foundation is laid, broad and sure, take up the higher combinations as far as desirable, though the combination of twelve, I believe, is generally fixed as the limit, in our Primary Schools. I am not sure that the work, conducted on strictly scientific principles, can be carried to this limit in three years. However, the experiment is yet to be tried.

I am certain that, if a class of children were carried through by this method, they would be incomparably superior, in point of independence of thought and of mathematical rapidity and accuracy, throughout their whole lives. Is it not reasonable? A child, in common with the rest of the world, will remember better the things that he sees for himself. If he counts out three times two objects half a dozen times, he will remember that the result is just six, without difficulty, his eye having been previously trained to recognize six at a glance; whereas the teacher might state the naked fact, that three times two were six, half a dozen or a dozen times, and he be as

oblivious of it ten minutes after the words had left her lips as he was at first; for the simple reason that he had not *seen* that three times two make six.

The present method of teaching these four fundamental rules is stupefying to the child. With so many facts laid before him to grasp at once, he gives up trying to conceive of the existence of each one. Hence, he strains his memory to fix it in his mind without any such conception, and how he ever does it is a mystery to me. In the brief time allowed for this paper, I cannot enter more in detail into the minutiae of the method proposed; but I have stated the general principles. Begin the subject as soon as the child begins to learn anything. Make him so familiar with numbers under ten, that he can tell at a glance just how many of certain objects are before him; then exercise him in combining numbers, commencing with the simplest, and proceeding gradually on, as the brain strengthens and the judging and reasoning faculties develop, to higher combinations; being careful never to state any result, as a *fact*, but to allow the child to discover each one for himself, repeating the operation till through the external eye it is impressed upon the mind, — which is thus both formed and furnished. Let this experiment be tried in some one of our city schools, or, better, by some teacher who can begin the subject, and carry it through, at least, to the completion of those forty-eight tables, now the bugbear of the Primary School teacher's life; and I am much mistaken if the children, taught by this method, do not, as a class, thank the experimenters to the end of their lives.

Let me mention another department in which this same exclusive cultivation of the memory appears. What is the use of the inordinate amount of spelling performed in the Primary School? What is the use of children, under nine years of age, being made to learn the orthography of words in which they have no interest, which they do not understand, and, worse, cannot be made to understand by any amount of explanation. It is a *strain* upon the memory.

Our worthy imaginary friend, before referred to, may claim that it is an admirable *discipline* for the memory; that nothing is so essentially strengthening to that faculty in a child as to plunge him at

once, without chart or compass, into a sea of ei's and ai's, ey's and ay's and eigh's. Granting that it is so, granting that, of all possible contrivances for converting children into loquacious parrots, it is the best yet devised, have we any right to undertake such a transformation? The formation of character is the development and expansion of *all* the faculties, not of one to the total, or almost total, exclusion of the rest. That produces one-sidedness, an ill-balanced character; and, when the faculty so favored is memory, alas, for the unhappy child so trained! and alas, for all who may have to endure the misery of an hour's conversation with him, when he shall have attained to man's estate! For my own part, I would rather a child should be able to write a letter in which all the simple words in every-day use should be correctly spelled than that he should be able to spell, with perfect accuracy, long columns of words conveying to his mind no idea whatever. Go into one of our Grammar Schools, and test the capacity of the pupils to write a simple composition on some common, every-day subject. I fancy that the spelling thereof would be of such a style as to cause the eyes of the experimenter to open wide with astonishment. Yet they will spell such words as "eleemosynary," "succedaneum," etc., with entire accuracy, though without the shadow of an idea of their meaning. What a mockery is it to initiate children into the mysteries of grammar, by informing them that a word is the sign of an idea, when half the words they have had to deal with, in their school experience, have been to them flat contradictions of the statement! Of *what* ideas, may I ask, are half the words in our Primary School spelling-book the signs, to the mind of a child? They are, to him, no more the sign of an idea than is a Greek or Hebrew word to the unlearned. Are there not words enough to be found which *are* the signs of ideas to suffice for the employment of the brains of children, at least, under nine years of age? Why not let them make their own spelling-book? Let them learn to spell the name of everything they can feel, see, smell or taste. Set them to exploring the realms of their own experience, to discovering the wonders of the natural world at their very feet, and spelling will be no longer a bugbear, when every word is thus made the sign of some actual idea.

Show them the importance of correct spelling by early encouraging them to commit their thoughts, their discoveries, to writing. Have a daily composition, and let all the misspelled words in those compositions make the substance of the next spelling lesson. Lead them to be *eager* to express their thoughts on paper, and they will soon feel the want of a proper medium by which to do it. Try the experiment once of throwing aside the spelling-book, and allowing the eager, inquiring minds of the children to make one of their own. I believe the result would astonish the doubters.

Were these modifications of the present methods of teaching arithmetic and spelling once introduced into our schools, there would evidently remain much more time on the hands of the teacher of the upper classes than she now finds. How would this time be occupied? First, the study of Physical Geography might be introduced, in place of the meaningless words discarded. It is a branch of study admirably adapted to the formation of mind, and one in which small children may be enthusiastically interested, if presented in a proper light. Let every new natural division be first represented to the eye; made attractive, by being made as beautiful as possible, before the name is given. Let the interest be still further awakened by the narration of facts or anecdotes relating to it. Then, while the interest is at its height, and the minds full of thought, allow them to put these thoughts into writing. Here, observe, is another opportunity for teaching spelling. Bring it in with the geography, by means of written compositions on every new geographical subject as it comes up. Natural History, too, can be made a powerful formative agent. Children will seize it with the utmost eagerness, and it may be made the means of getting more hard, yet to them delightful work from their little brains than seems at first conceivable. It is an actual fact, that children of eight, nine and ten years of age have become so interested in this study, as conducted in a certain Primary School in this city, as to go to our Public Library and get thence books, to read for their own private gratification. That was the height, the perfection of teaching, — so to interest a class, in any subject, that they will consider it, not a task, but an actual recreation; will come to it with real hearty zest

and enjoyment, and require compulsion rather to drive them from it than to drive them towards it.

How wide-awake, and active, and enthusiastic a class of children might be made, who were thus led to follow what is actually the bent of their inclinations! How much more real information might be imparted, how much more independence of thought called out, how much the habit of observation might be quickened, and the power of reasoning on the objects of observation strengthened! Is it so now? Do the minds of children, kept constantly at our boasted, much-talked-of city schools, expand, and fill up, and drink in with such avidity every new draught of knowledge presented as that of the little untutored son of the back-woods farmer, who goes to school six months in the year, and spends the rest in close and intimate communion with his mother Nature? I think not. Do children become more and more inquiring, more and more eager for information, larger in thought, and stronger in reason, the longer our school influences are brought to bear upon them? I think not. They learn a good deal, certainly,—that is, their minds become well stored with historical and geographical facts, grammatical definitions, mathematical rules, and endless collections of jaw-breaking, five-syllable words; but, for all the thinking, the reasoning, the general information, I fear a powerful magnifier would be necessary to discern it.

Now whose fault is this? Is it the fault of our teachers, or the fault of our Committee and their regulations? Both, it seems to me, though in both is abundance of good. We want more thinkers in the Primary Schools. It is not to be denied that there are, among the number of Primary teachers in the State, abundance of those who have brains enough and to spare, yet they refuse to bring these brains with their vast motive power to bear upon their work.

To be sure, a Boston teacher, if she obey the present regulations implicitly, cannot carry her class so far as would be possible were she perfectly free and untrammelled. But it is also true, that many do not use even the means towards this end that the regulations put into their hands. For instance, they totally ignore that clause which provides, that oral lessons on objects, size, form and color

shall be given in all our Primary Schools, and spend or waste their whole time in drilling on the spelling-book or the tables. Sufficiently good results in these may be secured, according to the present system of examination, if, at least, fifteen minutes a day be devoted to object-teaching; and, in the upper classes, half an hour a week to composition-writing, taking one of these object-lessons for a subject. More than this, it is possible to give daily oral lessons on Physical Geography, teaching all the common, natural divisions, and still to bring the class to the required point in spelling and arithmetic. This, to my certain knowledge, has been accomplished in more than one school in this city. Still, even supposing all this done, the fault remains; the memory, after all, is the principal faculty exercised. Object-lessons, or no object-lessons, the class must be brought up to the requisite point for examination, or, inevitably, the teacher's reputation is injured. It is required that the class shall go to a certain page in the spelling book, and to that page go they must, and thoroughly, or she loses ground in the estimation of her examiner.

Should the examination, then, be different? I think that in spelling it certainly should,—that the best spelling examination for applicants for admission to the Grammar School would be to require them to write a short composition on some familiar subject. If they could do it correctly, I believe the teacher who took them would have reason, as the term progressed, to thank her predecessor for neglecting Worcester's Spelling Book, and using Johnnie's or Charley's, as the case might be, instead. If examinations were conducted thus, it would be necessary, of course, to change the regulation requiring a certain number of pages in Worcester's Primary Spelling Book; to one requiring familiarity with the orthography of all common words in every-day use. As to the arithmetic, the teachers of the first, second and third classes are not to blame for drilling their classes on those five hundred and seventy-six abstract facts; they have got to be learned, and in a year and a half, and nothing but the cramming process can accomplish that result. Let it be commenced in the sixth class, and carried on by faithful, hard-working teachers as far as possible, and the result acquired by these teachers be made the standard of examination. They *may* be able

in three years to bring their classes to the same point, as to the number of combinations taken, as constitutes the *present* standard, but I think it doubtful.

To these modifications of the regulations, I would add the introduction of Physical Geography into the First class of the Primary School, the teachers being expected to prepare their pupils for examination in this branch, the same as in reading, spelling and arithmetic. This, evidently, would not add to the work of the first class, as it would be only a fair equivalent for the amount of time gained by the alterations in the regulations concerning spelling and arithmetic.

It seems to me that these alterations would place the Primary School more upon its proper footing, as the *mind-forming*, and not essentially *mind-furnishing* agent in education, and would thus be of the utmost benefit to the whole system.

Indeed, it seems almost useless to attempt to introduce reforms into the High and Grammar Schools so long as this evil is permitted to remain at the very root. Remove it, and time will very soon show the effects in the increased life and vitality of the whole body. Let it remain, and any increase of life and vitality will be a thing impossible.

EXAMINATION OF TEACHERS.

We had, not long ago, to take part in the examination of between thirty and forty young ladies, who were candidates for places as teachers in public schools. The special duty assigned us was to test their skill in the arts of spelling and composition, by giving out subjects upon which they were to write a few impromptu sentences. As we were left free to choose the subjects, we thought it an opportunity not to be lost to test the candidates' notions in respect to the *art of teaching*, and accordingly we gave out successively the following subjects: 1. Teaching little children geography. 2. Object lessons. 3. Composition for young children. 4. How to teach reading. 5. English grammar.

We got, of course, many crude results; nor should we ever

think of testing a teacher's skill *solely* by a set of written answers; but the results, imperfect as they were, were very interesting, as illustrating the different mental habits of the writers, and the different points of view from which they surveyed their work. Some of the answers were so good, that we are going to take the liberty of printing them. One young lady answers the geographical question thus:

"I should begin with young scholars by telling them of interesting productions of the earth, to excite an interest in the subject of geography. At the same time, to give an idea of map drawing, have them draw on slate or blackboard an outline of the school-room, or of some section of the town or city in which they live.

"To illustrate the use of the circles of the earth in locating places, call their attention to the use of streets, and numbers on those streets, in directing strangers, or finding their own way about a place. After these general ideas have been obtained in the use of the text-book provided, require them to learn all the facts contained in the lesson given, and induce them to search for other information. Taking a country, or section of a country, have them first draw a map of it by looking at the atlas; afterwards, one from memory. Then let them learn the principal natural features of the country, such as rivers, mountains, etc.; then the productions, the inhabitants, their occupations, etc.; also the political divisions of the country, and something of the form of government."

Another answers the same question as follows:

"I would have a good text-book, and would give to my pupils a lesson of reasonable length, with sufficient time in which to learn it. Before calling for the recitation, I would endeavor to explain any point not understood. On calling the class, I would require attention from all, would not depend wholly on the text-book, but would endeavor to draw out the ideas of the children, thus cultivating language. At the close of the lesson would have a short review, thus testing the memory of the scholars. During the lesson would make use of maps and globes, and allow the children to do so, as far as practicable."

And here is a third good answer:

"I have been able to make this subject most interesting by bringing it near home. Give children their ideas of the physical features of the country by illustrations near at hand, — the neighboring lakes and streams, hills and valleys, even if they are on a small scale. The law of mental association should be called into exercise. The street after a heavy shower may give a more correct idea to them of bays, straits, inlets, etc., than the best of maps."

If grammar is to be taught young children at all, we think that the writer of the following answer has a good notion as to the right way to teach it:

"This may be done at first without the aid of a book. I should teach, first, the different parts of speech; first, the noun, by requiring them to give the names of objects in the room, and put them upon the blackboard. After they fully understand what a noun is, give the name "noun." Next select an object such as desk, and ask what kind of a desk. The answers being given "a wooden desk," "a high desk," etc., tell them that these words expressing the *kind* of object are called adjectives; and proceed in this way with the other parts of speech, writing the words upon the blackboard, and being careful to give the *idea* first and afterwards the name. After teaching the adjective, I should take the article, which may perhaps be considered as a limiting adjective, and next the verb. Lead them to see, that a word that says something of an object is a verb. When we have introduced a verb, they will see that we have formed a sentence. Then consider the words that modify the verb, denoting manner, time, cause, place, etc., giving the name adverb; and so continue until they can distinguish readily between the parts of speech. It is a good plan to require scholars to bring in lists of these different classes of words. Then teach them the relations and properties of these words. Parsing and analysis will require the use of books."

And here is a candidate who, we cannot help suspecting, has taken lessons in vocal training:

"By some, Reading is regarded merely as a form in school, the sooner got through with the better; but, in my opinion, it is *one* of the *essential* parts of teaching. My first aim with a young class would be to get their voices into a proper condition for reading, by repeating the vowels in different pitches, sometimes the deep chest tone, again the high tone, made almost entirely in the head, and so continue with the different pitches, drilling them daily on these sounds. The most important part is to get a good, clear, full voice, before opening the Reader; then, in connection with the daily readings, continue the exercises on the vowels, and, after a while, the consonants; then words of few letters, repeating the word once or twice; then giving the sound of the vowel which is used in pronouncing the word. Exercises in breathing also aid the voice, inhaling the breath through the nostrils, and afterwards exhaling through the mouth."

Here is another good one on the same subject; and, if we remember rightly, they were the only two which laid any stress on the indispensable preliminary to good reading,—the proper training of the vocal organs.

"A teacher should never allow a sentence to be read mechanically, by the youngest pupil. Give them the idea, that they are reading to *find out something*, and the interest thus created will give expression, and eagerness to conquer difficulties.

"Drill in the elementary sounds, articulation and expression, are indispensable. Question on the subject of the lesson, requiring close attention and examination."

The following are specimens of good answers to the question about composition-writing:

"I would first dispel their wrong ideas and prejudices against it, or rather, I would not speak the word *composition* to them at all at first, but would lead them to compose short sentences, without being conscious of the exercise. Make the task light and pleasant as possible. Allow them to describe pleasing recollections. Bring the exercises into their grammar."

Another writes:

"I would call the children together, would ask them to tell me anything they knew about some subject I should mention. I might read them some short account of it. Then I would tell them to take their slates, and write in their own words all they could on the subject. After writing, I would have a few of them read; would show mistakes and how they might be corrected. For the second lesson, I would give them some easy subject to think about, and have each child be able to tell me something about it in a day or two, and in this would try to have the child's interest at home as well as at school. In commencing with young children, should want the exercise twice a week."

We give these answers, not because they contain anything extraordinary, but because they seem to us to indicate good notions of the art of teaching. It is very true that some candidates who could not write so well at a moment's warning might be found to teach better: and, with ample time at command, instead of a few hurried minutes, much fuller answers might have been obtained. But, imperfect as all such tests must necessarily be, it is pretty easy to form an approximate judgment as to candidates' notions of the art of teaching and, as far as it goes, the information, as one element in an examination, seems to us to be very valuable. — [Ed.]

THE STUDY OF LATIN GRAMMAR.

[The following is the third of the excellent papers which have been read at successive meetings of the Boston Social Science Association, by GEO. B. EMERSON, Esq., its President.]

I have been instructed by the directors, agreeably to the second article in the by-laws, which requires them to prepare for the opening of a subject by an essay or address, to offer something in writing upon one part, hitherto scarcely touched upon, of the subject which has so long occupied your attention. I would therefore respectfully present a few remarks upon the teaching of grammar, more particularly the grammar of the Latin language.

In doing this, I desire not to be misunderstood. I always have been, and I am, an advocate for the study of the Latin language, whenever, from the circumstances of the learner, there is time for it; and I advocate the study as the best means that I know of obtaining a thorough acquaintance with the English language. I object to what I think the unnatural and unphilosophical manner in which the Latin language is too often taught. And I am not alone. It is a very general opinion amongst those who are most interested in classical instruction, that a great deal too much time is devoted to the Latin grammar, especially at the beginning of the learner's course. Nearly all those who for the last fifty years have studied Latin have come to this conclusion. I have no doubt that the foundation of this opinion is the fact that very much of the time which should be given to the language is now given to the grammar.

Every teacher must be a teacher of language. In this country the English language is, on nearly every subject, the only means of communication between the mind of the teacher and the mind of the learner. The teacher cannot communicate a new thought, hardly a new fact, without teaching a new word or a new meaning of a word already known. Upon most subjects, words are the instruments which the mind uses in its own thoughts. Language is thus, of necessity, a most important study to every one, during all the early part of life. It is begun in the nursery. The child is all the time studying language. His progress in knowledge of whatever he sees, feels, hears, or in any way perceives, and in thoughts and conclusions of every kind, is measured by his progress in language. The capacity of a teacher, as a teacher, is measured by his power of using language, clearly and naturally, in describing or making known and felt whatever he has to communicate.

Every teacher therefore, whatever else he teaches, must be a teacher of language. The most accomplished is he who has the largest vocabulary of words which he knows how to use correctly and forcibly, and with feeling and taste, upon any subject which comes up. The proper use of the words which represent or describe things, and the properties and qualities of the things which are recognized by the senses, must be taught in the presence of the

things themselves. Hence the inestimable value of object lessons properly managed.

Most of these words, however, must be learnt out of school, in the parlor, nursery and kitchen, in the garden, stable and barn yard, in the fields, in the woods, on the hills, by the streams in the roads and streets, in the mills, shops and warehouses. Hence the vast advantage and blessing to a child — how little appreciated — of spending all the earliest part of his life in the country, in the midst of God's works, that he may begin to learn, to know, in the places where they are found, the creatures of which the Creator has made him lord, and while doing this, may enjoy for hours every day the air, sunshine and vigorous exercise which are the best foundation for perfect health of spirit and mind, as well as of body. At home must be learnt not only the names and uses of the objects, but that best part of the language which expresses the affections, duties and relations of home.

The most difficult part of language remains, — that part which we use in our *speculations* upon virtues and vices, upon all good and all bad moral qualities, upon whatever concerns character and manners, upon justice, equity and law, and that great inner world of mental and spiritual realities, thoughts, feelings, fancies, aspirations; what we call philosophy, metaphysics, logic, ethics, theology, politics; in one word, those higher and abstract relations of which we can hardly even speak but in words borrowed from the classical languages of the old world. How shall we best learn, how best teach, the correct use of the words in this part of our language? Is there any better way than by the study of the Latin language? Almost all these hard words, — the dictionary words, — are derived from the Latin, not only for the English language, but for the French, Italian, Spanish and Portuguese. Can there be a better or shorter and more economical way of learning all these words and their roots than by the study of the language from which they are derived?

But, for this purpose, we want as much as possible of the Latin language, and as little as possible of the grammar. The variations of the nouns and verbs must be learnt as they are needed. The abstract principles of the philosophy of the language, that is, the

definitions and rules, may be postponed indefinitely, most of them, for most persons, forever. No rule, no definition, is intelligible to a child till after he has learnt what it means from examples. Nothing, therefore, can be more unnatural, or more unphilosophical and absurd, than committing to memory and pretending to learn abstract propositions in grammar before the facts in the language, from which they were originally inferred, have been made familiar or even known.

The best possible way of learning a language is the natural way, — that in which every child learns his own native language; and he will teach best who makes, in teaching, the nearest approach possible to this natural mode. Let the teacher study and find out how nature does the work. A child begins with the names of those nearest and dearest. These he repeats a thousand times; next, one by one, the names of things, qualities and actions, continually making experiments upon the words he has learnt; and, as soon as he is able to put them together, making sentences out of all of them. The same thing might be done, in much the same way, in learning Latin. The learner should be led to make sentences, as many as possible, uttered or written, with all the words he has learnt. Only it is not necessary, of course, to go quite back to the ways of infancy with those who have passed the years of infancy.

The meaning and the use of the words and phrases, that is, the facts of his language, the language itself, should be first learnt, and, afterwards, if at all, the definitions and the rules, that is, the philosophical principles. Is there any reason why this method, the natural method, the method of Lord Bacon, which has given new life to almost every other department of human investigation — should not be adopted in learning language which lies at the foundation of all? By the present mode, a child is made to spend months, and even years, in committing to memory and reviewing sentences which he does not understand, and which he will not understand till months or years after, and which, to him, may be of very little use when understood. The same amount of study devoted to understanding and enjoying them, committing to memory the choicest passages from the best Roman writers in poetry and prose,

would make a person a good Latinist; and would be of lasting use, and a perennial source of pleasure. The hundreds of sentences upon the logic and metaphysics of grammar, now committed to memory, are seldom of any use except to a teacher, are speedily forgotten; and often the memory of the time wasted upon them makes the very thought of Latin grammar hateful.

As enriching the vocabulary, as laying up a store of thought and imagery, something of the study of Latin properly pursued would be helpful and pleasant to every one. The process of translating is one of the best exercises of the judgment and the taste — some people think the very best — that can be devised; and it is perfectly adapted to the mind in childhood and earliest youth. Translating properly — that is, rendering always the Latin words by their corresponding Saxon — is the best means that can be devised of making the learner familiar with this richest and strongest element of the English language. It is thus that those who have learned Latin best are most distinguished for the habitual use of the Saxon, instead of the Latin or the French element in conversation and writing. A poor Latinist, or one who knows nothing of Latin, talks in words of Latin origin. A good one is apt to prefer the racy Saxon English.

It is urged that the study of the abstract principles of the language — the rules — is a valuable exercise in verbal memory. Admitted. But would not the learning of the same amount of choice prose and poetry, passages from Virgil and Horace, Livy and Cæsar, perfectly intelligible, be a still better discipline of the memory, at the same time that it exercised the understanding and imagination, enlarged the intelligence, and stored the memory with wise sentences, rich thoughts and beautiful images?

One of the best Latin scholars of modern times, — many think him the best, — the great English poet and prose writer, John Milton, has left us a treatise, "*Accidence Commenced Grammar*," containing all that he thought necessary for a thorough Latin scholar. As it now stands, printed in large open type, it occupies fifty pages, 12mo. With a page and type similar to those of the common editions of Andrews and Stoddard's Latin Grammar, it would be con-

tained in 30 or 32. Would not that be enough? Do we wish our children to be better Latin scholars than John Milton?

D'Arcy W. Thompson, a man of genius, now Professor of Greek in Queen's College, Belfast, author of the "Day Dreams of a School-master," evidently an excellent Hellenist, and probably not less thoroughly acquainted with Latin than with Greek, says in that most entertaining book, that he will engage to put all the Latin grammar necessary to make a good scholar of a boy into twenty-four pages of a little book that shall sell for sixpence.

Much of what has been said of the study of the Latin grammar and language will be found, if carefully considered, to apply to the study of the English language and grammar. The definitions and rules are, in many schools, committed to memory before they are or can be understood; and much of the time which most of the children have to learn to speak and write our language correctly, which can only be done by speaking and writing it in sentences made by themselves, is wasted in committing to memory and repeating unintelligible sentences, most of which would be of very little use even if they were understood.

"GO, WORK, TO-DAY."

THE Summer Leaves are playing with their shadows,
 And working while they play;
 The Summer Flowers are dancing in the meadows,
 And keeping holiday;
 The Summer Birds among the leaves are singing,
 And building while they sing;
 The Summer Bees from summer flowers are bringing
 Rich stores on busy wing.
 Oh! let the Bees and Birds and Leaves and Flowers
 This lesson to thee tell,
 While fleet away the golden summer hours,
 To act thy *Present WELL*. — A. R. W.

Editor's Department.

A CORRESPONDENT writes: "I wish to suggest, that some one experienced in teaching mental arithmetic publish a portion of that experience in the *Teacher*. Should it be studied by those who have not learned to perform examples with a pencil?"

Our own notion is, that children may be taught very early the simplest combinations of numbers, and that such teaching decidedly ought to precede written arithmetic. But the great fault of elementary teachers is, that, confined as they very improperly are to a very few subjects, they almost invariably try to proceed *too fast* with them. This is the case in grammar also, and in spelling. If Primary teachers had reasonable liberty and tolerable skill in object teaching, they might make numbers and letters — often meaningless abstractions to the child — subordinate to live oral instruction in such a manner as to impart real interest to what remains otherwise dead and lifeless. We are extravagant enough to think that the child's instruction in natural history, in physiology, in natural philosophy, should begin in the Primary School, and be continued through all other grades, till it ends in the High School or College. The present mode of confining the poor little children to the driest of abstractions, to numbers, letters, names and parts of speech, is an abuse which will only be tolerated so long as the study of the philosophy of education is neglected. Of course, our readers will not misunderstand what we mean by the *study* of such subjects as we have named above in Primary Schools. We refer our correspondent to an admirable article on these subjects in our present number.

A CONNECTICUT correspondent asks, "Can you not give us some time an article on *distinctness of articulation* in reading, and the best method of securing it. The want of it seems to me to be the very greatest deficiency in the teaching of most of our common schools, and the point in which they are most behind private schools." Distinctness of articulation can only be acquired, we believe, by the assiduous practice of a system of vocal gymnastics, like the admirable one of Mr. L. B. Monroe, the efficient teacher of vocal exercises in the Boston public schools, of the effects of which we gave some account in our number for May 1866. No one who has ever seen the results of his teaching or had the opportunity to observe the difference between a trained and an untrained voice, can fail to be convinced that in all our ordinary teaching of reading we begin at the wrong end, by attempting, as it were, to make children play tunes before they have learned the use of their instrument, even before, we might almost say, they have any instrument to use. We should think a singing master insane who should set a beginner to singing difficult pieces before he had even practised his scales; yet this is substantially what teachers of reading do, when they set untrained children to reading, or rather murdering, the fine poetry and prose ex-

tracts which make up the contents of our reading books; contents, much of them, we may say in passing, about as well adapted to the mental wants and mental condition of children as would be choice extracts from Sir Wm. Hamilton's *Metaphysics*. The very frequent failure of our public schools in this most important branch — a failure by no means confined to Connecticut — arises, we think, from these two sources: first and foremost, entire ignorance on the part of teachers of the proper method of training the voice; and secondly, the want of adaptation to the mental condition of the pupils in the pieces given for exercises in reading. We would give more for *Robinson Crusoe* as a child's reading book than for all the Readers that ever were made. Children cannot, any more than grown people, read properly what they neither appreciate nor even understand.

We wish that all our public school teachers could have the benefit of a course of instruction in vocal gymnastics, and then would have that perseverance, in following them up with *practice*, without which they are of comparatively little value.

DANIEL WEBSTER. — At a recent regular meeting of the sub-masters of the Boston Grammar Schools, the following resolution was passed, and has been transmitted to us with a request that it be printed in *The Teacher*:

Resolved, That we, the sub-masters of the Grammar Schools of Boston, hereby express our strong disapprobation of an editorial notice in the March number of *The Massachusetts Teacher*, commending an article in the January number of the *North American Review*, on the Life and Character of Daniel Webster. The article in the *Review* and the notice in *The Teacher*, we regard as alike expressions of rancorous political hatred, which not even the grave has power to soften. But the notice in *The Teacher* is open to the farther objection of being entirely foreign to the subject to which the journal is dedicated. We protest against the intrusion of party politics into a periodical devoted to the cause of education, by which that cause can only suffer, while no good can result from it to the interest of politics or government.

We cheerfully give place to the protest embodied in the resolution, and desire to say in doing so, that no one must be held responsible for the paragraph referred to, save our own individual editorial self, though we presume that if the sentiments of teachers were canvassed there would be, now-a-days at least, as many to take our view of the character of Daniel Webster as would take the opposite. On one point, however, we must correct the friends who censure us. We assure them that they do great injustice to our motives in penning the notice of Mr. Parton's article in attributing "rancorous political hatred" as actuating us. We did, indeed, take an earnest part in those political struggles for freedom, which have at last, but through so much blood and suffering, ended so gloriously; and our feelings towards Daniel Webster were doubtless colored by watching, as we did, that downward career which at last ended in his speech of the 7th of March. But we believe we have no rancor and no hatred towards him. We spoke plainly, because we felt strongly, and because we think that great mischief is done to the rising generation by holding up such a man as an example to be followed. The question is not one of "party politics," but a far deeper one, — a question of moral example and moral education; and as such, we hold

it to be a legitimate topic for discussion in an educational journal. If teachers are to take the place in the community which is legitimately theirs, they must do it by not fearing to discuss, in a free and fearless spirit, the topics which should interest them as men and as citizens, and by recognizing the fact that every question, moral, social, and political, has its educational bearings.

We feel sincerely sorry if we have hurt the feelings of any one who felt a personal attachment to Daniel Webster. Our pages are as freely open to the adherents of one view of any subject as to those of the opposite. It is only by the freest utterance of contrary opinions that the truth can be attained; but it is wrong to impute unworthy motives to those who differ from us.

PRACTICAL EXERCISES.

CAMBRIDGE HIGH SCHOOL. — EXAMINATION PAPERS.

First Class : English Poetry.

[Milton's *L'Allegro*, *Il Penseroso* and *Lycidas*.]

1. Give a sketch of Milton's life up to the year 1638.
2. Give a brief outline of *L'Allegro*.
3. Give examples of obsolete or obsolescent words from the poems we have read. [Mention any words now in use having the same roots.]
4. Give examples of words used by Milton in a sense different from that which they usually have in our day. Explain and illustrate the former and the present uses of some of these words.
5. Write one of the passages from *Il Penseroso* which have been committed to memory by the class.
6. Point out words in this passage derived from the Latin, directly or indirectly, and from the Saxon. How do you know that the latter are Saxon?
7. Explain the following allusions:

Then to the *well-trod* stage anon,
If *Jonson's* learned *sock* be on, —

[What is the parallel passage in *Il Penseroso* ?]

— the belman's drowsy charm
To bless the doors from nightly harm.
—— ladies, whose bright eyes
Rain *influence*, —

8. What do the following illustrate? Give other instances of the same kind.
Of *Cerberus* and blackest Midnight born, —
Comes the blind *Fury*, with the abhorred shears, —
9. Write the passage from *Lycidas* (165-185) beginning, "Weep no more, woful shepherds."
10. Explain some of the peculiarities of expression in the passage.

Third Class: Botany.

1. What are the *essential* organs of a flower? What are the separate parts of these organs?
2. Explain the ways in which plants obtain their nourishment as they first spring from the seed.
3. Mention any plant whose cotyledons rise above ground. Any whose cotyledons never serve the purpose of leaves.
4. What are the characteristics of Exogens?
5. What are the characteristics of Endogens?
6. Explain the mode of growth and flowering of biennials.
7. What are the two most important uses of plants? Explain.
8. What is the fruit of the Strawberry? The Apple?
9. Define *raceme*, *catkin*, *spadix*.
10. Explain how a pistil answers to a leaf. Where are the ovules attached?

Fourth Class: Book-Keeping.

1. In every transaction, what name is given to the *buyer*? To the *seller*? What does the word *to* indicate? The word *by*?
2. What difference between the first and second forms of accounts? What books are necessary in these forms?
3. Give examples of accounts kept with other than persons.
4. What are *Bills Receivable*? *Bills Payable*? When do you debit and credit each?
5. Give the manner of balancing and closing an account in the first form. If the balance is not *paid* at the time of closing, how would you indicate the fact?
6. What is the *Journal* in Double Entry? What does the word *to* indicate in this book?
7. Describe the *Stock Account*. The *Profit and Loss Account*.
8. What is the use of the *Trial Balance*? How is it made?
9. Saturday, May 5, 1865. I have sold \$125.00 worth of merchandise, as per Sales Book C., page 39, to T. Hill, for cash. Journalize and post.
10. Monday, May 7, 1865. Bills Receivable, No. 3, is this day taken up. The face of the note is \$276.00. It was given January 7, 1865, and draws interest to date at seven per cent. Journalize and post.

HINTS TO INEXPERIENCED TEACHERS. *To call the roll.*—Appoint one scholar in each class, whose duty it shall be, each morning and afternoon, to stand and report the names of such members of his class as are not present,—the teacher recording them at the time. Or, if more convenient, divide the school into sections, and make it the duty of one scholar to look after and report his division. In a school of eighty scholars, it requires but a minute or two to take the attendance; whereas calling each name would consume three or five minutes each half-day. No school can afford to lose eight or ten minutes each day in reading the scholars'

names, as is the custom of many teachers. With the constant pressure of important school-work, we must economize the time as much as possible.

To secure a good attendance. — Offer a half-holiday a month to those scholars who are not absent or tardy during the month. It works admirably. There are few scholars but will occasionally (and very many frequently) be absent for a half-day or a day for no good reason, or, at best, a very trivial one, and with the consent of their parents too. What teacher has not been severely tried on account of frequent absences, which he knew were unnecessary? He has, on a given day, an important subject to teach; but two or three of the class, more or less, are not there, and very likely they are those who most need the explanations. Better furnish them a half-day, when all who are entitled to it can be out together. The regular lessons for that half-day can be omitted, and review lessons or miscellaneous exercises given, which those who are present will be most likely to need. This method may not be entirely free from objections, and will not wholly remedy the evil of irregular attendance, by any means; but we have learned by experience that it very much lessens it. C. W. C.

QUINCY.

The Beauties of English Grammar. In the examination of teachers, some of the results of which we have made the subject of comment in another article, one of the questions set in grammar was, What part of speech is the word "every?" Having an opinion upon that subject ourselves, but being a little uncertain as to the answer we should get from the school-books, we had the curiosity to look it up in forty-three different grammars (mostly school-books), which we had upon our shelves; and from them we obtained no less than *twenty-four* distinct answers. We think it will amuse, and perhaps instruct our readers, if we give here this illustration of the chaotic state of a subject which, it is very generally thought, it is of the most vital importance to teach young children. We give the definitions in no particular order, but with the names of the authors, and the date of their publications. Some of our readers may perhaps be able to add to the list.

Angus (1862), and *Nutting* (1858). — An Adjective.

Heussi (1846), *Arnold* (1860), and *Lewis* (1867). — An Indefinite Numeral.

Bain (1865), and *Morell* (1863). — A Distributive Numeral Adjective.

J. G. Barton (1855), and *Hyde Clark* (1859). — A Distributive Pronoun.

Goold Brown (1845), *S. S. Greene* (1847), *Harrison* (1856), and *Kerl* (1863). — A Pronominal Adjective.

Fowler (1859). — An Adjective Pronoun.

Bishop Lowth (about 1750), *French* (1863), *Harrison* (1856), and *Wells* (1852). — A Distributive Pronominal Adjective.

Wm. Cobbett (1820). — An Indeterminate.

Kenyon (1851). — An Extensive Adjective of direct allusion.

Latham (1850). — A Compound Pronoun.

Murray (1795). — A Distributive Adjective.

Mason (1858). — A Demonstrative Adjective.

Maetzner (1860), *Hunter* (1859). — An Indefinite Pronoun.

Morris (1858), *Hunter* (1859). — A Definitive.

Alger (1833), *Tower* (1859), *Hazen* (1842), *Quackenbos* (1865), *Fisk* (1834), *Smith* (1858), *Bullions* (1853). — A Distributive Adjective Pronoun.

Noah Webster (1843). — A Distributive Attribute, but sometimes a Substitute.

Welsh (1855). — An Adnominal Adjunct.

Clark (1847). — A Pure Specifying Adjective.

Mulligan (1852). — A Determinative Adjective.

Butler (1846). — A Limiting Adjective.

W. S. Barten (1860), *Goldthwait* (1850), *Weld* (1852). — A Definitive Adjective.

Covell (1860). — A Definitive Pronoun.

De Sacy, translated by *Fosdick* (1837). — A Circumstantial Adjective.

James Brown (1840). — A word of the agnomo-cladatory, meta-relatory class, numeral-climatory and sine-indicatory.

The last is the man for our money, — "author of the system from which parents may teach themselves and their children, and from which adults *with good minds*, and the habits of study already formed, may acquire, *with very little attention*, a correct knowledge of syntax without any aid from a living teacher."

His book is a wilderness of sweets, — "pöecornes" and "nepöecornes," "gnomaclades" and "agnomaclades," "phemic," "diphemic" and "presindiphemic." As Mr. Squeers would say, "Here's richness!" But how far, perhaps we might inquire, does the teaching young children, Mr. James Brown's system of nomenclature differ, *in principle*, from the teaching them that of our ordinary grammars, in which there appears such a pleasing discrepancy of opinion; a nomenclature which, when traced to its source, will prove, in the main, to be the work of certain Grecian James Browns at the period of the decline of Greek literature.

The philosophical study of the mechanism of language, pursued in its proper connections with logic and metaphysics, and at an age when the mind is competent to grasp its abstractions, is for some, but not for all minds, one of the most interesting of studies. The study of grammar as at present often pursued in our Grammar, and even in some of our Primary Schools, is one of the most preposterous of absurdities, and one of the greatest obstacles to the spread of *real* education.

Let us not be misunderstood, however. The simple rudiments of grammar, the broad distinctions between the parts of speech may be taught — we have known them to be taught — in such a manner as to give the greatest pleasure to little children. Let the teaching stop there, and let the rudiments of some other study be taught in the same way. Let various studies be thus begun, and then let them all be carried on *pari passu* through Grammar School and High School. But, do not, as now, let two or three of the driest and abstractest of all studies be allowed to act like great mental *wens*, consuming the life that should flow into all parts of the intellectual being. There is no reason why, instead of the jargon of these grammars, and the useless rubbish

of the last half of the arithmetics, all the boys of the upper classes of the Grammar Schools should not acquire a useful knowledge of the elements of plane geometry, of the mechanical powers and the rudiments of natural philosophy generally, and of some notion, at least, of natural history, — respecting which last we have spoken in another place. How interesting such knowledge would be in the acquisition! how valuable in after life! Can this be said of three-quarters of what they now learn in the Grammar School? [ED.]

When, if ever, is the "*Connecticut*" rule for the computation of interest in "Partial Payments" more favorable to the creditor than the common, or "*United States*" rule; and why?

J. D. F.

STAMFORD, CONN.

INTELLIGENCE.

At the last meeting of the Cambridge School Committee, Miss GEORGIANA M. ROBERTS was unanimously appointed Assistant to her father, Mr. B. W. Roberts, Master of the Allston School.

At the annual examination of his school, Mr J. D. MARSTON, Master of the Cutter Grammar School, of West Cambridge, received a handsome ice-pitcher, as a present from his pupils.

The Secretary of the Board of Education desires us to give notice, that the Board have assigned Delegates from their number, to the County and State Teachers Associations, as follows:

To Hampden Co. Association, Abner J. Phipps, Esq., of Lowell.

Franklin	"	"	Rev. Samuel Seelye, D.D., Easthampton.
Essex	"	"	Hon. Emory Washburn, Cambridge.
Middlesex	"	"	Prof. John P. Marshall, Tufts College.
Worcester	"	"	Rev. James Freeman Clarke, D.D., W. Roxbury.
Norfolk	"	"	David H. Mason, Esq., 20 Court Street, Boston.
Plymouth	"	"	Rev. William Rice, Springfield.
Barnstable	"	"	The Secretary.
Dukes	"	"	John D. Philbrick, Esq., Boston.

The State Association, Messrs. Clarke, Seelye and the Secretary.

BOOK NOTICES.

THE LAWYER IN THE SCHOOL-ROOM. By M. M. Walsh, A. M., LL. B., New York, Schermerhorn & Co. 12mo, pp. 161.

A little volume with this title has recently been issued professing to comprise "the laws of all the States on important educational subjects, carefully compiled, arranged, cited and explained, by Mr. M. McN. WALSH, A. M., LL.B., of the New York Bar. Never could a work be more opportune in time, if it tends to throw light

upon the question of school government and school discipline, which has been so largely of late engaging the public attention. We had just been reading the Report of the doings and sayings of the, some fifth or sixth, meeting of the Social Science Association, of the good city of Boston, upon this exciting topic, when the little work before us was laid upon our table. The Lawyer in the School-room! Just the thing that is wanted to tell us whether and when corporal punishment may be employed; how large a little girl must be when we may, and how little a large girl must be when we may not, use the ferule or the rod. Here is one who will certainly tell us whether they do whip children in the Prussian Schools, or not; and how far learning is beat into the phlegmatic little Dutchmen, who have their homes around the Zuider Zee! But alas! while he treats of many things, and with becoming interest and zeal, he deals very much in generalities, and leaves us to guess their application. And, while he gives us a half-score of pages of high-wrought language and metaphor, "made up," as he tells us, from the Hon. N. Bateman's Fourth Biennial Report, upon the doctrine and necessity of obedience, wherein he tells us that, "behind all Jehovah's dealings with angels, men and devils, there lingers an immutable, inexorable, eternal MUST," we are all in the dark how the thing is to be done.

But we ought, perhaps, to be satisfied with even this general statement of the law. The difficulty of carrying it further is intrinsic and inherent. And one might about as well undertake to illustrate the duty of being neighborly by prescribing how often we ought to visit the family who lives at our next door, or what share of the product of our strawberry bed we should send with our compliments to the family who sit next to us in church, as to define under what precise circumstances the teacher should apply the persuasive potency of the reserved power of the rod. In his first chapter, our author gives some account of the system of schools in China, the ancient States of the East, and the leading kingdoms of modern Europe, and treats generally of the American plan of education. In his second and third, he gives us the law, as it was and as it is, in relation to "religion in schools," with a summary of the statutes of the several States upon the subject. And then comes his chapter on *corporal punishment*, first, as parent and child; and second, as teacher and pupil. But in respect to the latter, he very properly confines himself to the law as it regulates and limits the extent to which this may be applied without subjecting the teacher to the charge of criminality. He accordingly cites numerous cases where these questions have arisen, and settles it, as one would suppose, as a principle, that a teacher, while in school, stands in *loco parentis*, and has, to a limited extent, a parent's authority to chastise his pupil, if necessary, in order to preserve order in the school, provided it be done in a reasonable manner and with proper motives. His legal propositions are not quite as institutionary in form as Tribonian's were when framing his code and digest, but the fault, if fault it is, is partly to be ascribed to the nature of the subject, and partly to his willingness to adopt the popular form of stating these propositions, which he borrowed from the reports and essays of school commissioners and practical educators. He devotes one chapter to "Punishment for Misconduct out of School," and cites several cases where questions of this kind have been con-

sidered; in one of which, in Indiana, the jury found the teacher guilty, and assessed upon him a fine of "one cent, without costs." Without undertaking to follow the discussion, we may perhaps venture the suggestion, that, if a teacher has a right to administer reasonable corporal punishment upon a turbulent, insolent, or profane boy, for the peace and good order of his school, while inside of the school-room, it is absurd to suppose that he is powerless to protect himself from insult, or the school from uproar and confusion, because bad boys choose to carry on their measures from the outside of the building. The following extract from the remarks of the author upon the relation of teachers to their pupils will serve to illustrate his views, and his manner of "putting them." "They must teach the science of health, with all the learning, but without the pay, of a doctor; they must inculcate the principles of morality with all the impressive sincerity, but without the sectarianism, of the minister; they must be altogether more patient and discreet than parents; and even more even-tempered than God Almighty himself,—for he was "wroth" when he punished the wicked, whereas, if a teacher punishes in anger, he is guilty of an assault and battery; they must invent schemes to invert human nature, and make every bad thing and thought abominably disgusting, especially to the "desperately wicked," who have no good in them; they must tenderly moderate the zeal of the too ambitious, and inspire the dullest blockhead with a manly thirst for fame and knowledge, and the incorrigibly uncouth and vicious they must endow with tastes, instincts and manners of the refined and virtuous. And, in short, they must turn all from the thousand paths that lead to indolence, ignorance and folly; and prepare them to find infallibly all the ways of pleasantness and all the paths of peace. These are the high purposes for which teachers are employed, and it would be a shame and reproach to require so much of them, and, at the same time, tie their hands by withholding from them the power which is indispensable to their success. The law is not so unreasonable; for, with every well-defined duty, the law gives an incontestable right to all the power necessary for the performance of that duty" (pp. 101, 102). This picture may not perhaps be over-colored, though it must be confessed, that, as a statement of what the law is, the manner differs somewhat from that of the few legal writers whose works have fallen under our observation.

Of the remaining chapters, one relates to "The Instrument to be used in Punishing," in which he informs us that the courts of Massachusetts hold *ferules* as coming within proper instruments for that purpose. The next treats of "The Power of Parents over Teachers," and the work closes with "The Law as to the Teacher's Morality," in which all States agree, and all systems are in accordance, in requiring it to be of the highest character and order.

The book is really valuable in the way of hints and suggestions, and the collection which it contains of citations from statutes and decided cases upon the subjects of which it undertakes to treat. Its publication is significant of the growing interest of the country in her schools. And one lesson may be gathered from it, that, after all, our schools have got to depend for their success far more

upon the good sense and enlightened wisdom of the community in which they are planted than upon any mere system of laws, or any new Bureaus of Education.

W.

THE AMERICAN NATURALIST: A Popular Illustrated Magazine of Natural History. No. 1, March 1867. Monthly. Salem, Mass. Published by the Essex Institute. \$2.00 a year.

We rejoice to see this beautiful magazine, and hope it will be the pioneer in a much-needed educational reform, and do good service in spreading a love and a taste for the study of natural history, now so utterly neglected. Much as there might be to urge in favor of the practical utility of the study, it is not on that account that we desire to see it take a more prominent place in education. The practical utility of studies must certainly be taken into account in the selection of those which should make up our school curriculum, but it should never be the only motive for choice. What are the studies that best develop and train the youthful mind, is the prime question, the answer to which should guide us in that choice. It is because that training which objective studies give is the natural and proper training, and because the usual training in words and abstractions is unnatural, cramping and deadening, instead of strengthening and developing to the youthful faculties, that we wish to see the study of physical and natural science begun — we hope our readers will not be startled — in the *Primary School*, and carried through schools of all grades, till it ends with the University and the Essex Institute.

We shall not, of course, be misunderstood. We do not want primary school children to be taught about *Acalephs* and *Brachiopods*; but we do want to see a generation even of primary teachers who can give a lesson from a beetle or a barberry bush as readily as from a primer; we do want to see the child's observing powers trained at the age nature has set apart for that work; we do want to see the child's love of activity turned to account, a habit of inductive reasoning established, long before he is able to comprehend the meaning of the word "induction." The usual method is to postpone these studies till after he has learned all about induction, which is, in most cases, to postpone them forever. We want to see the utterly unphilosophical method now prevalent, of making words precede that which words stand for, abolished, and the child's education in the inner mechanism of words postponed till he has gained a stock of ideas to employ words about. We want the boy to know something of the properties of oxygen before he has learned all about the Greek vocables from which the mere name is derived. We want him to watch the habits, and even learn the anatomy, of the land-snails in his garden-walk, so beautifully figured in this beautiful magazine, *before* he troubles himself much about the learned name *helix* which it pleased some old naturalist to give them. The name and the naturalist are of very little consequence, — there is very little education in learning them; but it is positive mental training and mental development, and the *natural* training and development of the youthful mind, to watch the ways and study the nature and habits of the creatures themselves, to watch the phenomena of nature, and God's universe, and study the laws which govern them. No fear but the language-

faculty will develop itself in children. Give the mind but thoughts, and it will provide itself with language for them; and, at first, the process should be unconscious and without effort.

It is because our education system is topsy-turvy, a pyramid on its apex, a horse with the cart before him, that the mind, in contemplating educational matters, is sometimes filled with mingled feelings of disgust and despair. School is a treadmill kept in motion by the master's ferule and grinding chaff. What do the majority of people owe to their school education when they carefully analyze its results? Perhaps a knowledge of their letters and of the rule of three. The rest has been *self-education*. Did they get much from their study of grammar? from committing to memory the pages of, say Worcester's Compendium of History? from learning the situation, on the map, of the Revillagigedo Islands? Or have precious fruits resulted from spending the best years of boyhood in learning with infinite pain and disgust the important distinctions in a dead language between *et* with the indicative and *et* with the optative, and the important fact that "the word before an enclitic, if proparoxytone or properispomenon, adds an acute on the ultima," — especially when nobody knows what the effect of that process was.

We hope our readers will pardon us this slight ebullition of spleen. Our chance has gone by, and we don't like the recollection of our own dire experiences of "a good education." We don't like to think, that here in the middle of the nineteenth century, it is still necessary to cram the heads of boys, up to the age of seventeen, with learned rubbish, in order to gain for them admission to what are called our Universities, while at the same time boys of seventeen may, and the majority do, enter those same "Universities" unprovided with the simplest and most elementary knowledge of natural or physical science. The entrance-examination to Harvard College, for instance, is worthy of the dark ages. Its preposterous requisitions in one direction, its equally absurd no-requisitions in others, have all but ruined our higher schools. It is only since those schools, and especially our public High Schools, have begun to strike out boldly in other directions, that they have begun to regain the confidence of the public. The college itself will not regain it, until that entrance-examination is made to conform a little more nearly to the demands of the age, and to the laws which govern the development of the youthful mind.

We know it is said that the study of natural and physical science in schools is impossible, — that there are no means and appliances, no cheap apparatus, no collections, no text-books, no teachers. Thanks to the baneful influence of our college system, this is all too true. There are good Latin and Greek grammars, but there is not a single good text-book in natural philosophy or natural history. There are fifty applicants for every opportunity to teach Latin grammar; but when some parent or teacher desires instruction for his son or his school in natural history, not a teacher can be found. In what public school in New England is there a collection of the birds, plants or insects of New England? In what school is the child taught to distinguish between the trees which grow about his school-room door? In what school is he *not* taught from

his tenderest youth such precious information as this: "Frequently the explanatory term is predicated or assumed of the other by means of some neuter, intransitive or passive verb. The explanatory term is then usually called a *predicate substantive*. The verb, if any other than *be*, shows how the title or characteristic is made known."* Precious information for school-boys! No wonder our schools cannot yet dispense with the rod and the strap!

But just as the demand created the supply of Latin grammars, so the demand when it comes, — and may it come soon! — will create a supply of good natural histories. And we look with great hopefulness to the little band of ardent young naturalists who have gathered together in the good old city of Salem, and are working with their coadjutors in other parts of the country so unselfishly and in such brotherly harmony for the promotion of the interests of natural science. The munificent endowment of the Essex Institute, with its already valuable collections, by GEORGE PEABODY, bids fair to make it one of the centres from which will proceed a really living influence for the promotion of the study of natural history; and we hope this beautiful magazine will receive such a welcome as to encourage our friends to still further efforts. We sent them three subscribers the day we received our number. We hope that many of our readers will follow our example. — [ED.]

INAUGURAL ADDRESS, delivered at the University of St. Andrew's, Feb. 1, 1867. By John Stuart Mill, Rector of the University.

We hope that none of our readers who are interested in the subject of higher education, and who are not subscribers to the *Living Age*, will fail to enclose twenty-five cents to Mr. Littell, for No. 1,189 of his periodical, containing this admirable address. Mr. Mill is, as may well be supposed, a thinker who can see what is to be said on both sides of such a controversy as the one respecting science and the classics; and, though we think him, spite of all he says on the subject, a little Utopian in his expectations in regard to educational progress, and do not believe that the Greek language will continue to form a necessary part of every scheme of liberal education, yet we are glad to see the defence of linguistic studies taken up on such broad and philosophic grounds, and by a writer who is so alive to the importance of science becoming a more prominent element in modern training. No better exposition of the importance of scientific study can be found than the one here given, and, as a whole, the discourse is an admirably luminous and comprehensive survey of the whole field of liberal studies. It should be perused by every student.

FAMOUS AMERICANS OF RECENT TIMES. By James Parton. Boston: Ticknor & Fields, 12mo, pp. 473.

This elegant volume contains, besides the sketch of Webster, which we mentioned in our last number, biographical accounts of Clay, Calhoun and Randolph, among politicians; of Stephen Girard and his College; of Henry Ward Beecher and his Church; of Goodyear; Theodosia, the daughter of the traitor Aaron

* Kerl's English Grammar.

Burr; of Cornelius Vanderbilt; and of a man who, more than any other in the country, has brought disgrace upon American journalism, — Bennett, the editor of the infamous New York Herald, who, we are happy to find, is not an American by birth. The history of the struggles of Charles Goodyear is very instructive, and we need hardly say that the book is an eminently readable one. It is ornamented with an excellent likeness of Calhoun.

THE ENGLISH OF SHAKESPEARE: Illustrated in a Philological Commentary on his Julius Cæsar. By Geo. L. Craik, Professor of History and of English Literature in Queen's College, Belfast, Ireland. Edited from the third revised London edition, by W. J. Rolfe, Master of the High School, Cambridge, Mass. Boston: Crosby & Ainsworth, 16mo, pp. 386. \$1.75.

We are glad to see this very neat edition of a little book which we have long known in its English form. We hope it will be widely used in our High Schools; for we believe that no introduction to a knowledge of Shakspeare so convenient and so practically useful as a class-book can be found. We are very much in favor of substituting, in the higher classes of schools, for the shreds and patches and the meagre information of which our manuals of English literature are composed, the continuous *critical* reading of whole works of great authors, — a whole play of Shakspeare's, a book of *Paradise Lost*, or of the *Fairy Queen*, or the *Task*, or the *Seasons*, or enough of a few good prose authors to enable the pupils to catch their spirit and appreciate their style. This is far better than such a rapid and cursory glance at the wide field of literature as merely leaves the pupil's mind filled with a confused mass of names.

The book contains first, Prolegomena on Shakspeare's personal history, his works, the text of his plays, his editors and commentators, the mechanism of his verse, and a particular account of this particular play. All this is interesting. Then follows the text of Julius Cæsar, as regulated by its most judicious editors; and then two hundred and fifty pages of historical, critical and philological commentary. The late Professor Craik was a very competent English scholar, and the author of the best available history of English literature that has thus far been written. In his reprint, Mr. Rolfe has made diligent use of more recent Shakspearean commentators. We cordially recommend the book to the attention of teachers.

THIRTIETH ANNUAL REPORT OF THE BOARD OF EDUCATION, together with the Thirtieth Annual Report of the Secretary of the Board. Boston: Wright & Potter, State Printers. 8vo, pp. 120, 303, and cviii.

No more valuable series of documents can be found than these of the Massachusetts Board, and the last is not inferior to its predecessors in interest. We have only space in this number to glean some of the most interesting statistics. The whole number of public schools in the State is now 4,759, being an increase for the year of ten; the number of persons in the State between five and fifteen is 255,323, and the ratio of attendance for the year seventy-three per cent. The number of children at school under five has decreased by four hundred and eighteen, while the number over fifteen has increased by one hundred and nine. The number of male teachers is 1,086; of females, 6,512; being an increase for the

year of males, fourteen, of females, two hundred and seventeen. The average wages of male teachers (including High Schools) per month is \$59.53, being an increase of \$4.76; of females, \$24.36, being an increase of only \$2.54. The expense of public schools, exclusive of school-houses and school-books, has been \$2,163,364.94, being an increase for the year of \$222,768.87, and a percentage on the valuation of one mill and ninety-eight hundredths, and a cost for each child of \$7.82. The return of the cost of school-houses erected and repaired is not given, but it must be large. There has been a *decrease* of seven incorporated academies and eighty-six private schools. "The above summary," says the Secretary,—"the advance in the amount of money raised for schools of thirty per cent in two years, and this in spite of the burdens brought on it by the war, is certainly gratifying. Yet the Board point out the fact, that while the State is paying \$200 for the support of each criminal in her reformatory institutions, she is paying less than \$50 to prepare her teachers in her Normal Schools,—a startling discrepancy, which surely ought not to exist, when, as the Board well point out, the public school is "the great antidote for crime and pauperism." We shall make extracts from this interesting volume in our next.

THE PERSONAL HISTORY OF DAVID COPPERFIELD, by Charles Dickens, with original illustrations, by S. Eytinge, Jr. Boston: Ticknor & Fields, 1867. Square 16mo, pp. 494. Ticknor & Fields.

"Diamond Dickens" are books to fall in love with. In their way, they are the perfection of neatness in book-making. Compact and handy, with a type, small, indeed, but very distinct, bound in the prettiest style, and with the very nice illustrations of Eytinge, the volumes are just such as one likes to have on the table to beguile a weary hour, or as one would put in his trunk for the seashore or the mountains next summer. We commend the pretty books to the attention of all our readers.

THE FOREST CHOIR: a Collection of Vocal Music for Young People. By Geo. F. Root. Chicago: Root & Cady.

The more such little books as these get into our schools the better. We trust the time is fast coming when music, as an indispensable element in juvenile instruction, will be fully appreciated, and when the school in which it is not taught will be looked upon as a strange anomaly. This little book contains thirty-four chapters of elementary instruction and exercises, and a copious collection of children's songs, and looks as if it could be furnished at a very reasonable price.

A PAPER FOR YOUNG PEOPLE. Vol. I., No. 1. New York. Price, 5 cents. Weekly.

The idea of this neat juvenile is a very good one. It is to be a sort of *Living Age* for young people, furnishing them with a weekly supply of good reading, selected from all quarters; and thus likely to be of much better quality than if wholly original. It would be a cheap and pleasant visitor to a school, furnishing interesting information, and new and agreeable pieces for reading lessons. The first number is very well selected, and we recommend it to the notice of teachers.

THE NURSERY: A Monthly Magazine for Youngest Readers, by Fanny P. Seaverns. Boston: A. Williams. \$1.50 a year.

Even the babies are to have their magazine; and certainly they could not well have a prettier one, printed very neatly, full of pretty wood cuts, and with a neat and tasteful cover. It will be a pleasant monthly visitor to many a family of little people; and to teachers and school committees it is offered at one dollar, for use in Primary Schools. We commend it to all who have the care of little children.

ANNALS OF A QUIET NEIGHBORHOOD, by George Macdonald. New York: Harpers, 12mo, pp. 381.

A pleasant, quiet, wholesome story, which we recommend to book clubs, though we are not sure that readers will not here and there skip a little "preaching."

THE VILLAGE ON THE CLIFF. Harpers' Library of Select Novels.

A charming story by Miss Thackeray, the daughter of the great novelist.

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

[The gentleman to whom the *Teacher* is so much indebted for his efficient and careful management of its subscription list wishes us to say as follows:]

"Subscribers return the *Teacher*, without their post-office address, or even their names, and then complain because we do not discontinue. A and B say we persist in sending the *Teacher* when they do not wish it. Why do they take it from the post-office? We do not wish any one to take the *Teacher* who does not want it.

"One woman writes, 'It makes me sick every time I look at it.' Why does she look at it? It may be that she likes that kind of sickness, because, like seasickness, it does one good. In the same mail with the above came the following:

"I am glad to see *The Massachusetts Teacher* take the stand it does. The teachers of Massachusetts ought to be proud of it, and without doubt they are. I shall do all I can to increase its circulation in this vicinity, believing that no teacher can afford to be without it. Enclosed find \$1.50, for 1867."

"A 'Chairman of School Committee' writes: 'Enclosed find \$6, for four new subscribers. . . . Every teacher should be obliged by a law of the State to take the *Teacher*.'"

"We have had but very few orders to discontinue, and have obeyed whenever we knew who gave the order.

"Two subscribers have refused to pay for last year. They say, 'We did not subscribe.' Did not? They received and read each number according to their own statements. Mr. — and Miss —, is that honest?

"At the commencement of the year we sent the January number to each of our subscribers, but did not expect them to continue their subscription, unless they continued to receive and quietly read number after number. By so doing they

legally renew their subscriptions, and are as much bound to pay as though they had made a direct request of the publishers.

"If subscribers to the *Vermont School Journal* who have paid something for 1867 will send their receipts, they will receive the *Teacher* in place of the *Journal*."

We are requested to state that a limited number of bound sets of the *Massachusetts Teacher*, from 1856, are for sale at a low price at the Teachers' Rooms; and also that the Engraved Certificate of Membership of the State Teachers' Association is to be had there. We take the occasion to renew the notice that the Teachers' Room, 119 Washington Street, is now open and warmed throughout the day; and teachers from abroad are cordially invited to make use of it.

We have in type, and shall print in our next number, the report of the very valuable discussion on Graded Schools, recently held at the Teachers' Room.

We have to thank various correspondents for answers to the questions respecting Grammar School Studies in our last number. We shall make some use of them in our next, and meantime shall be very glad to receive more.

We should be glad to hear again from our Connecticut correspondent N.

We are requested to state that there has been left on sale, at the store of Messrs. Brewer & Tileston, a complete set of the Massachusetts Education Reports, uniformly bound in cloth.

The Editor of this journal is desirous of procuring the volume of Lectures of the American Institute of Instruction for 1833 (published 1834), to complete a set. Will any one having a copy for sale or exchange communicate with him?